

FOOD STAMP PROGRAM (FSP)
GUIDEBOOK for AUTHORIZED RETAILERS in KANSAS

THE KEY DEFINITION OF ‘ELIGIBLE FOODS’ IN THE FSP:

Products which may legally be purchased with food stamp benefits, are referred to as ‘**eligible foods**’ -- defined as: food products intended for human and home consumption, sold at-or-below room temperature, and not intended for immediate consumption on the premises. All nonfood items, heated-foods, and products consumed on the premises, are ineligible for purchase with FSP benefits. Following a retailer’s authorization, FNS provides an Official Food List poster, which must be prominently displayed at all times. Although foods heated above room temperature at the point of sale are *not* eligible -- cold, prepared, foods (such as salads and sandwiches) *are* eligible, provided they are *not* consumed on the premises.

AN EXPANDED DEFINITION OF ‘ELIGIBLE FOODS’:

- All staple food items – meat/poultry/fish; breads and cereals; fruits and vegetables; and dairy products – in all forms and packaging (fresh, frozen, canned, dried, potted, etc.).

[Note: Although a recipient may purchase live fish with FSP benefits, other live animals and birds are **not** eligible. A recipient cannot use benefits to pay slaughtering fees, processing charges, or storage and/or locker fees.]

- Seeds and plants for use in gardens to produce food, or to grow spices used to prepare food.

[Note: Fertilizer, soil, insecticide, or weed-control agents, **not** eligible for purchase with FSP benefits.]

- Specialty foods such as dietetic items and weight-loss products, diabetic foods, fortified or enriched products, certain health foods, ethnic and Kosher items, infant formula, etc.

[Note: If a product is primarily used for medicinal purposes, as either a therapeutic agent or deficiency-corrector, the product is **not** eligible for purchase with food stamp benefits.]

- Cooking oils, spices, seasonings, condiments, food coloring (*except* Easter-egg dyes), cooking wine, vinegar, vanilla extract, cake mixes, etc.

- Snack foods such as candy, cookies, crackers, pretzels, nuts, popcorn, cupcakes, soft drinks (including bottled water), potato chips, ice cream, chewing gum, etc.
- Distilled water and ice, unless such items are specifically labeled for nonfood use.
- Prepared foods such as sandwiches and salads from a delicatessen, or fountain drinks, but only if such items are at-or-below room temperature at the point of sale and intended for home consumption.
- Unheated pastry products from the store bakery such as donuts, rolls, cakes, pies, etc.
- Seasonal and/or special-occasion products such as Easter baskets, Christmas stockings, fruit baskets, birthday cakes, wedding cakes, etc., are eligible, but only if the value of the food items exceeds the value of the nonfood items.

AN EXPANDED DEFINITION OF 'INELIGIBLE NONFOODS'

- All nonfood items, including -- but not limited to: soap (hand-soap, dish-washing soap, laundry detergent), fabric softener, paper products (toilet tissue, napkins, paper plates), plastic products (plastic cutlery, storage/freezer/trash bags, plastic wrap), aluminum foil, cleaning supplies (including oven-cleaner), cosmetics and toiletries (toothpaste, mouthwash, dental floss, hair-care products, shaving supplies, perfume), vitamins and minerals, medicines and health aids (aspirin, cough drops, cough syrup, cold and flu remedies, antacids), food preparation products (cookware, utensils, cookbooks, kitchen appliances, charcoal, lighter fluid; articles of clothing), gifts and toys, pet foods (including bird seed), hardware, household items (pens, pencils, writing tablets, envelopes), books, magazines, newspapers, lottery tickets, gasoline and motor oil, greeting cards, videos, tapes, CDs, and so forth.
- All alcoholic beverages (containing any amount of alcohol), beer, wine, and liquor.
- Food preservation materials and equipment, including pressure cookers, canning-jars and lids, paraffin, freezer-containers, wrapping paper, instructional booklets, etc.
- All tobacco-related products, including cigarettes, cigars, chewing/smokeless tobacco, lighters, matches.
- All heated-foods -- sold above room temperature (broiled, fried, baked, steamed, barbecued, roasted), such as chicken, pizza, barbecued meats, hamburgers, hot dogs, sandwiches, pastries, soups, stews, chili, coffee, tea, cocoa, etc. This includes all such items heated in a microwave oven on the premises.

FNS has made eligibility-determinations for numerous products and merchandise. Information regarding other eligible or ineligible items, including specific brand-names, is available upon request from the Wichita Field Office: (316) 691-9912.